

STAMP 4S Test Taker Guide

What is Avant STAMP 4S?

Avant STAMP stands for *Standards-Based Measurement of Proficiency* and is a web-based test that assesses language proficiency. An Avant STAMP 4S test has four sections – Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking, and the results of this test inform test takers and educators about learning progress and program effectiveness. Avant STAMP 4S test items are based on real-world, everyday situations. Avant STAMP 4S measures a test taker’s language ability according to Benchmark Levels that are based on national standards. Test results will indicate the level of proficiency achieved for each section of the test.

Preparing for the Avant STAMP 4S Assessment

Visit the [Technology Check](#) page to confirm your computer is configured properly and all technology preparation steps are complete before beginning testing. Take an Avant STAMP [sample test](#) to familiarize yourself with the layout of the test and the types of prompts that you can expect. It is also advisable to read the Avant STAMP 4S Benchmarks and Rubric Guide if you want information about the skills you need to demonstrate to achieve a certain test level.

Rules for Taking an Avant Test

Avant Assessment’s online language proficiency tests must be taken in a proctored environment, except Avant PLACE, with a proctor who is authorized by the organization sponsoring the test. To protect the integrity and security of our tests, the proctor cannot be a parent, guardian, or relative.

Avant’s test utilizes spontaneous, unrehearsed situations to measure real-world language proficiency. The purpose of this assessment is to measure what you are able to do with the language without support of any translators, reference material (including taking notes during any portion of the assessment) or assistance of any kind.

Please review Avant’s Testing Policies below.

The following is **NOT ALLOWED during the assessment.**

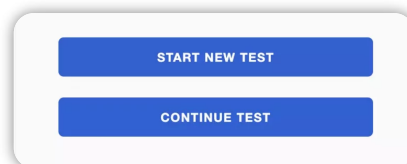
1. The use of dictionaries, textbooks, cell phones, paper, pens, or other support

- materials (paper-based or electronic). The only time test takers should have access to pens or pencils is if the Writing section is being administered as handwritten.
2. Taking or using notes of any kind (digital or handwritten) for any portion of the test, including the speaking and writing sections.
 3. Writing down a speaking response and reading it as your recorded response. This will lower your score for that response, and it may be scored as a ZERO because it involves the use of paper or reference material.
 4. Using additional computer or smartphone applications (e.g., Word, email, chat) or having other browser windows open during testing.
 5. The use of Google Translate or any other translation aid (paper-based or electronic).
 6. Using copy-paste, printing, screen capture apps/tools, video conferencing, messaging tools, or scanning and taking pictures/videos with your phone.
 7. Sharing information about questions or prompts on the test with anyone.
 8. Speaking or corresponding with anyone other than the proctor during the test. Or, receiving any advice or help from anyone during the test.
 9. Using violent, profane or inappropriate language in your responses. This will lower your score for that response and it will be scored as a ZERO.

Violating any of these rules may invalidate your assessment results. We recommend also referring to your organization's policy on academic dishonesty.

Logging in to Avant STAMP 4S

- Your teacher or proctor will provide the URL, Test Code and Password for the Avant STAMP 4S login page
- After entering the Test Code and Password you will see 2 buttons for starting a new test or continuing a test. After clicking on one of the buttons you will be asked to enter your Login Name
 - **Start New Test:** Click this button when starting a test for the first time. After clicking this button you will be asked to create a Login Name
 - **Continue Test:** Click this button to resume a test you have already started. You will be asked to re-enter the Login Name you entered when you started the test the first time



After clicking on one of the buttons you will be asked to enter your **Login Name:**

Set Up Your Profile

Please Create a Login Name

Your login name is what will help you return to your test later. Your login name needs to be unique from other test takers. Ask your teacher/proctor for guidance on what to enter and make sure you can remember it! Examples: Your Student ID or Full Name

Login Name

NEXT ➔

Login name should be:

1. Between 5-25 characters long.
2. Any combination of letters, numbers, or any of the following special characters: @ (at symbol) _ (underscore) – (hyphen) . (period) , (comma) ' (single quote).
3. **Unique within the testing group** (e.g. student or employee ID number or email).

Test takers should memorize their login name. If test takers need to stop and continue the test at a later time, they will need to enter their login name exactly as they did the first time.

- Your teacher or proctor may have suggestions on what to enter in this field but please note that your Login Name cannot be the same as anyone else's in your testing group.
- Be sure you remember how you entered your Login Name because if you need to resume you will need to use the same Login Name you started the test with previously.

Profile Page

The profile page is the first screen that appears after the test taker logs in. All test takers are required to create a profile. It is used to verify the test taker information, gather additional information about the test taker and record information about the test taker's background with the language being tested.

The only required fields are:

- First Name
- Last Name
- Test Taker ID
- Confirm Test Taker ID

Other fields are optional. However, we encourage test takers to use the optional fields. They

provide a wealth of information that is used by testing coordinators and teachers.

CREATE PROFILE

*Required

If you need to resume the test:
1. Go back to the Login Page.
2. Fill in the Test Code, Password, and Name fields with the EXACT Test Code, Password and Name you used to log into the test previously.

You entered the following Login Name: tom.jones@unrealschool.com

* Remember to type in your name as it appears above if you need to log in again and resume the test.

First Name*

Last Name*

Grade

What language did you learn as a child and speak with your family?

Do any of your parents or grandparents speak Spanish?
 Yes
 No

Test Taker ID*

Confirm Test Taker ID*

Email: NOT REQUIRED. Complete only if instructed to do so by proctor/teacher

Confirm Email

How many years have you studied or spoken Spanish?

Have you studied or lived in a country where Spanish is the national or primary language?
 Yes
 No

SUBMIT

Taking the Avant STAMP 4S Assessment

Your proctor will let you know what section of the test to start first. Reading and Writing sections are usually taken together (the Reading section is a prerequisite for the Writing section). Listening and Speaking sections are also usually taken together (the Listening section is a prerequisite for the Speaking section).

The test will provide helpful instructions at the beginning of each section. Please read the instructions carefully.

Responses to test questions are submitted using the NEXT button, located at the bottom right of the screen.

Unless directed otherwise, complete all sections of the test until the Test Complete message appears. If you get logged out of the test, you can log back in with the same credentials to continue where you left off.

READING AND LISTENING SECTIONS

The Reading and Listening sections of the test are multiple choice and computer-adaptive, meaning that each new question is selected based on previous responses. Because Avant STAMP 4S is used to determine language proficiency for test takers who are at Novice, Intermediate and Advanced levels, the Reading and Listening sections start out with questions at various levels. If you are at the early stages of language learning, the test may challenge you, but don't be frustrated if you encounter a topic or words that are unfamiliar to you. Do your best, but keep in mind that an incorrect answer on an unfamiliar topic is okay and provides the system with valuable information needed for determining proficiency.

As your test progresses, you may see easier or more difficult questions based upon your earlier answers. Each test taker will follow a unique path as he/she moves through the test. You will see approximately 30 questions in each of the sections. The Reading section takes, on average, 35-40 minutes to complete and the Listening section averages 35-40 minutes.

Either section may take longer for test takers who are getting many higher-level test items, which feature longer reading or listening passages. The speed of your Internet connection can also affect the length of the test.

Here are some tips:

- Read the question and answers before you attempt to read or listen to the passage (this will help guide your reading/listening and help you move through the test more quickly)
- Do not translate each word that you read or hear – translating each word is not reading or listening for comprehension and it will take more time that you can better use in later sections
- In the Listening section, you can listen to each recording two times
- If you're having trouble reading the text in the images on the test, you can enlarge your screen with the following key combinations:
 - On a Mac: Press the "Command" and "+" keys at the same time
 - On a Windows/PC: Press the "Control" and "+" keys at the same time

WRITING AND SPEAKING SECTIONS

- These sections start with a sample item
 - Use the sample Writing item to practice keyboarding special characters you may need to use
 - Use the sample Speaking item to ensure that your microphone is working properly
 - Do not spend much time crafting answers to sample questions as they do not contribute to your final score
- Provide your response using the target language you are being tested in
- Write or record at your highest possible level
- Provide all detail requested in the question and enough detail to fully demonstrate your writing or speaking skills
- Stay on topic
- Pace yourself
 - Allow sufficient time for all three of your Writing/Speaking items
 - Complete responses for all items are needed to accurately determine your proficiency level
- In these sections, click **NEXT** to submit the response and move to the next screen
- After clicking **NEXT**, you will not be able to return to the question

WRITING SECTION

The Writing section consists of one sample and three test questions.

- For some languages the test will include a character box where the appropriate symbols and accented letters are included and can be clicked. No additional action is required to set up a virtual keyboard for these languages.
- Other languages require that a virtual keyboard is loaded. A standard keyboard will be used to type characters corresponding with the virtual keyboard. (your teacher or test proctor can show you how to do this)
- To see which languages require loading a virtual keyboard visit the [Writing Input Guide](#). This guide also includes directions for loading the virtual keyboards
- The test will **AUTO-SAVE** test taker's writing every 10 seconds.
- When done with a test question, click **NEXT** to save the response and move to the next question or screen

SPEAKING SECTION

The Speaking section consists of one sample and three test questions.

- Organize your thoughts before you start to record
- To record a response, click **Begin Recording**
- When done recording, wait two or three seconds, and then click **Stop Recording**
- After recording, click **Listen** to listen to your recording
- You can then do one of the following:
 - If you want to add to the recording, click the **+ sign**
 - If you want to delete the recording and start over, click on the **Trash can**
- Avoid long pauses when you are recording
 - Use the **Stop Recording** and **Begin Recording/+ Sign (Add to Recording)** buttons as needed
- When the recording is complete, click **NEXT** to save your response and move to the next test question or screen

VERY IMPORTANT

For the Speaking Section, click **Listen** after recording to verify that the response was recorded properly.

- If the response is inaudible or of poor quality, **DO NOT CLICK NEXT**.
- You can try recording again, but should contact the test proctor or teacher if there are headset issues, or if a problem persists
- Never click **NEXT** to bypass the test item –if the problem cannot be resolved during the current testing session, click **STOP TEST** (and resume the test after the problem is resolved)
- If you see the **Begin Recording** button again after clicking **Stop Recording**, this is

indicating no recording was captured

Following these procedures will prevent having a speaking response that cannot be rated.

Completing the Avant STAMP 4S Assessment

- If you are not completing the test in one session, follow the instructions from your teacher or proctor about when to click Stop Test
- You have not completed Avant STAMP 4S until you see a screen that says "Test Complete."
- If you need to finish the test at another time, plan to do so within 14 days of starting the test (or within the timelines specified by your teacher or proctor).

Resuming the Avant STAMP 4S Assessment

To resume a test, click Continue Test after entering the test code and password and re-enter your Login Name exactly as you did the first time. The test should resume at the point where

you left off. Contact your test proctor or teacher for assistance if you experience difficulty resuming your test.

Undated March 2022